

ETP Veterans Pilot Program Guidelines

Background

- The need for employment training assistance for veterans is increasing, due to the number of active and reservist personnel who have performed military service in recent years. Some veterans have returned to the California civilian workforce and found their previous jobs are gone. A U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs study found that 18 percent of the veterans who sought jobs within one to three years of discharge were unemployed, while one out of four who did find jobs earned less than \$21,840 a year¹. Thus, the Governor and the Legislature have emphasized their intent on increasing services to veterans in all programs.

In response to the need to assist veterans, ETP has designated service to veterans as a funding priority in its Fiscal Year 2008-09 Strategic Plan. Following are guidelines to implement a veterans pilot program to recruit and train veterans in multiple employer contracts (MECs). These are guidelines only. If a proposal raises the need for further modifications, that will be accomplished on a case-by-case basis with direction from Executive Staff. Unless modified by these guidelines, all other program criteria apply.

Purpose

- This pilot will implement the 2008-09 Strategic Plan's prioritization of veterans, in order to increase program participation by veterans and members of the California National Guard.
- The pilot will assist unemployed veterans in entering the workforce and improving their opportunities for advancement in high wage, secure jobs.
- The pilot will also enable the Panel to test the concept of new training models designed to serve veterans.

Funding

- The Panel may approve up to \$2 million in FY 2008-09 for the Veterans Pilot Program, under its regular program and Special Employment Training (SET) program.

Outreach/Technical Assistance

- The Panel will collaborate with its workforce partners in targeting and providing outreach to veterans and veteran-related groups to promote the pilot program and recruit participants.

¹ "Study: War Veterans Face Job Search Woes", February 8, 2008, <http://www.wtopnews.com/?sid=1341378&nid=116>

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- The Economic Development Unit will conduct marketing and outreach to Veterans' groups and entities that provide services to Veterans, in order to promote the benefits of ETP-funded training for veterans, and to help identify potential contractors and recruit trainees.
- Regional Office staff will provide technical assistance to contractors throughout the contracting process.

Contractor Eligibility

- No special eligibility requirements apply to this pilot. MECs must qualify to contract with the Panel per UI Section 10205(c) as one of the following:
 - A training agency
 - A group of employers
 - A local workforce investment board (WIB)
 - A grant recipient or administrative entity pursuant to the Workforce Investment Act

Employer Eligibility

- No special eligibility requirements apply to this pilot. Participating employers must be subject to payment of the Unemployment Insurance Tax per UI Code Section 10201(b).

Trainee Eligibility

- Participants must be unemployed veterans who have served on active full-time duty in the Armed Forces and were (a) honorably discharged, or (b) released from active duty because of a service-connected disability. (See Title 22, CCR Section 4400 (aa).
 - For the purpose of this pilot, veterans will include reservists who have served on active full-time duty, and who are still on reserve status.
 - For the purpose of this pilot, the California National Guard is considered to be a branch of the Armed forces.
- Participants will be new-hire trainees. Participants who currently have or are eligible for military-covered unemployment insurance benefits, or who have exhausted such benefits, within the last 24 months, will be deemed to meet the standard eligibility criteria per UI Code Section 10201(c)(1).
 - On a case-by-case basis, any unemployed veteran or reservist may qualify. For example, there may be good cause for having exceeded the 24-month eligibility criterion in UI Code Section 10201 (c)(1), as in the case of a veteran who was not ready to re-enter the workforce for many years due to a disability.

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Post-Retention Wage

- No special wage requirements or waivers are applicable to veteran projects.

Employment Retention Requirements

- Full-time employment is required for a minimum of 30 hours per week during the consecutive 90-day employment retention period, with up to three eligible participating employers.
- For occupations where it is not customary for a worker to be employed 90 consecutive days with a single employer, retention may consist of 500 hours within 180 days, with up to three eligible participating employers.

ETP Reimbursement

- For the purpose of this pilot, a new class/lab reimbursement rate of \$20 per hour is established.
- The new hire cap on cost per trainee may be waived for good cause, on a case-by-case basis. HUA and SET/HUA is deemed good cause.
- In projects with pilot and non-pilot trainees, staff should separate pilot trainees from non-pilot trainees into different job numbers so that the pilot trainees may be reimbursed at the pilot fixed-fee rates.

Support Costs

- MEC Contractors with at least one Veterans' pilot Job Number will qualify for support costs of 12% for the full approved amount of funding.
- Advance payments of support costs may be provided for any MEC, in amounts of up to:
 - \$5,000 for contracts approved at \$100,000 or less
 - \$10,000 for contracts exceeding \$100,000

Advance payments are available for projects with at least one pilot Job Number.

Incidental Placement

- Incidental placement of veterans with public and non-profit entities is permissible but placement generally should not exceed 25% of the number to retain in employment, by job number. The incidental placement rate may

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increase on a case-by-case basis to 35% if the contractor can demonstrate good cause. (SET/multiple barriers or HUA is deemed good cause.)

Curriculum

- At least 50% of total training hours in a pilot project Job Number must consist of vocational skills training. The remaining hours may consist of literacy training as defined in T. 22 CCR Section 4400(n). For this purpose, training of veterans and members of the California National Guard is deemed an exception to the 45% limitation at T.22 CCR Section 4420.

Documentation of Trainee Eligibility

- Contractor is responsible for determining trainee eligibility in accordance with trainee eligibility requirements set forth in these Guidelines. Contractor must keep documentation of eligibility on file and available for review by ETP Monitors upon request.

Data Collection

- At contract closeout, contractors must complete a survey to provide ETP with quantitative and qualitative data including, but not limited to:
 - Recruitment outreach
 - Eligibility determination
 - Training completion
 - Placement efforts
 - Actual training cost
 - Stability of participating employers
 - Areas served (rural or urban)